

homicides in these three cities were cut in half.

A similar program in New York saw homicides in a South Bronx neighborhood where a program was being implemented decline by 37 percent compared to a very similarly matched neighborhood nearby that was used as a control site.

I can give you more and more evidence of how these investments in neighborhoods lift people up economically and help stop the cycle of violence.

So I can shower you with data to show you why commonsense changes in our gun laws would do something about this stunning increase in the rate of gun deaths in this country from 2019 to 2020, but we can also just come together around an investment in these communities and these kids and these families that doesn't necessarily have the same high degree of political temperature as the debate around guns does, and it still will have a significant impact.

So I will continue to come down to the floor and make this case. I will continue to come down to the floor and try to tell the story of these victims of gun violence—kids like CJ Brown.

I hope that this will be the last chart. I hope that the next chart, in fact, will show that these numbers are coming down. But I doubt that I will have that opportunity because until we get serious about making changes in our gun laws, to update them to match with the preferences of 90 percent of Americans, and until we get serious about investments in these neighborhoods—part of the Build Back Better agenda—I fear that these numbers will continue to rise higher and higher.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I speak today to recognize the 3 million men and women, Americans, who have served our Nation in the two decades since September 11, 2001, in what has become known as the Global War on Terrorism.

The days during—in just the last month—during this botched and chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, were a terrible time of reckoning for our Nation. I am angry, discouraged, and concerned about the way and the manner by which the United States of America departed.

President Biden's announcement in April to completely withdraw American troops by September 11 without taking appropriate security precautions, including preparation for a return of the Taliban to Kabul, was irresponsible and will damage America's interest for years to come and endanger the lives of thousands of women and children in Afghanistan.

Additionally, the lack of urgency to do right by the thousands of Afghans who worked alongside Americans will forever be a source of shame for this

administration. But as I said many times before, the withdrawal from Afghanistan was not the fault of the men and women in uniform.

In the days following September 11, 2001, the call to service was answered by thousands—thousands—of Americans who sought to defend the United States. These men and women left behind their families and careers to serve a greater good. I cannot think of anything more honorable than stepping up to defend our homeland from a threat that was, at the time, relatively unknown.

For most of our men and women in uniform, the Global War on Terrorism has been the primary mission of their entire careers. I run into people regularly who tell me about their service, and they saw what happened on 9/11 in New York City at Ground Zero. They saw what happened in the fields of Pennsylvania and what happened at the Pentagon. They decided it was their moment to step forward and defend and protect their Nation, to make sure that freedom and liberty remained the hallmark of who we are. And all of the sacrifices they and their families have made were in support of that effort and it was an effort they believed in and I certainly hope they still do.

Those who stepped forward to serve, eradicated vast networks of terrorists who wished to do America harm, making it absolutely clear that no one can harm Americans without our swift and certain retribution. They also brought Osama bin Laden to justice, destroyed the ISIS caliphate, and eliminated its founder.

In Afghanistan, our men and women serving in the military brought hope to a brutalized, war-torn country for the first time in decades. Incredibly, an entire generation in Afghanistan came to age knowing what it feels like to see freedom and to feel freedom.

Tragically, we saw Afghanistan quickly fall to the Taliban. It happened because of a haphazard and unorganized withdrawal process that has made our country and our world a less secure place. We all saw the images of terror and desperation as Afghans tried to flee their fate, many at the cost of their lives. We saw the footage of the chaos, the tear gas, and the explosion. We lost 13 lives of our honorable brave men and women in uniform to an attack outside the airport gates as they tried to rescue innocent families from their Afghan brothers and sisters in arms.

These scenes captured our Nation's attention, rightfully so. But unfortunately, in the days that followed, mainstream media's interest in Afghanistan began to wane. Take a look to see what is happening in Afghanistan now. See the desolation, the death, the destruction, the hunger, and the fear. This failure to have attention on what is going on in Afghanistan must not and should not be the case. We must continue to honor those who served and who will serve our country in the future.

We should consider S. 535, the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act. This bill was introduced by the Senator from Iowa, Senator JONI ERNST, herself a veteran. It will authorize the location of a memorial on the National Mall to truly honor those who served to eradicate terrorism. It will honor the 3 million men and women who served and especially the thousands of servicemembers who gave that ultimate sacrifice—their lives. This memorial will also honor, heal, empower, and unite soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coasties who made those sacrifices.

I would guess many of us in the U.S. Senate have seen—we witnessed some of the healing that personally occurs in times that have met with the Honor—as I have met with the folks who have been here on the Honor Flights, those visitors who gather at our war memorials to remember, to be together, and, yes, to heal.

Last week, I was at a number of our memorials here in our Nation's Capital with a group of over about 160 Vietnam veterans from Kansas. I have been visiting with those veterans in almost all of the visits of Kansans who come here, and in those visits, I met the World War II veterans, the Korean war veterans, and the Vietnam war veterans who have a place of honor on the Mall where they can go to meet other veterans, to lay flowers, to pause and reflect, and remember the brothers and sisters that they have lost.

Just this weekend, back in Valley Center, KS, the Moving Wall—a tribute to those who lost their lives in Vietnam; the thousands, the 627 Kansans who lost their lives in Vietnam—was a place in which people gathered to do exactly that.

I hope someday I will be able to attend an Honor Flight to the Global War on Terrorism Memorial and meet with the generation of veterans who fought to bring peace to the Middle East and who fought to bring the United States into a safer and more secure place. It will be my honor and privilege to do so.

I am here on the Senate floor to pay tribute, to honor and respect, and to tell those who served in the Global War on Terrorism that we respect them; we thank them for their service; and we love them.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, first, I commend my colleague from Kansas for his remarkable commitment to this Nation and to those who serve this Nation. And he is always there at the Honor Flights for World War II, the Honor Flights of those who served in Korea, of those who served in Vietnam, and those who served in the Global War